

Inspection of a good school: Bishop Fox's School

Bishop Fox Drive, Taunton, Somerset TA1 3HQ

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 March 2023

Outcome

Bishop Fox's School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Bishop Fox's School. Badges awarded for sporting and academic achievement and for leadership roles are worn with pride. Many pupils' blazers are adorned with a dazzling array of badges. This is a school where excellence is aspired to and celebrated.

Warm relationships between pupils and staff create a harmonious atmosphere. Pupils have trusted adults that they can speak to if they have any worries. Most pupils are confident that staff will respond swiftly to the rare instances of bullying.

All pupils know how they are expected to behave and why this is important. Pupils know that poor behaviour will not be tolerated. Staff use the rewards system to remind pupils of the high expectations they have of them. Consequently, pupils behave well. There is a calm and focused atmosphere in lessons and around the school site.

Leaders aim to develop 'the whole child'. Leadership roles abound and younger pupils aspire to these. There are many clubs for pupils to attend, and most do. They provide for a wide range of interests and talents and include sports teams and competitions, chess, choirs and book groups. Pupils learn to be tolerant and respectful of each other. They value this.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum. They have identified the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn. The curriculum structure enables pupils to build on what they already know. There is academic rigour for all pupils. More pupils now continue to follow a strong academic curriculum, which includes a language and a humanities subject, into key stage 4. A few pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) follow a different curriculum to their peers. This curriculum is well matched to

pupils' individual needs and future aspirations. Teachers and the SEND department support and challenge pupils with SEND to make the best possible progress.

Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. They check on what pupils have learned and close any gaps in knowledge that are identified. Activities in every lesson ensure that pupils' re-visit what they have learned over time. The work that pupils complete shows that they build a strong knowledge of the subjects they learn. However, pupils do not have appropriate opportunities to discuss the subjects that they are learning. This means that some lack confidence to articulate what they know and misconceptions can persist. Leaders make sure that staff know how to support pupils with SEND. Teachers adapt teaching to ensure that pupils with SEND learn well.

Leaders have prioritised reading. Pupils learn the important vocabulary they need for each subject. They read books with their tutors which encourages a love of reading and help them to develop their wider cultural understanding. Pupils who cannot read well enough get the precise support they need. Most become proficient readers as a result.

Provision for pupils' wider personal development is an area of particular strength. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) links to the school values. It covers areas such as healthy relationships, misogyny and British values. Pupils remember what they learn and value it highly. They enjoy the opportunities that they have for discussion in PSHE. They listen respectfully to the views of their peers and express their own. The careers programme prepares pupils well for making choices about their next steps in education, training and employment. Pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged get additional support to make decisions about their futures. All pupils take part in trips and visits. These deepen their knowledge of the subjects they study and expand their educational horizons.

Staff know what they are working towards and why because leaders communicate this clearly. There is a shared sense of purpose, which contributes to staff being proud to work at the school. Leaders have acted to reduce staff workloads and improve well-being. Staff appreciate this.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to identify concerns and to respond to these. They understand the concerns that are prevalent in the school and the local area. Effective training and clear communication between staff contribute to a very strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders make prompt referrals to other agencies to secure the help pupils need.

Pupils learn about potential safeguarding risks in an age-appropriate way. They know how to keep themselves safe and how to seek help when they need it.

Appropriate checks are made on the suitability of all staff to work with children.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teaching approaches do not enable pupils to have appropriate discussion about their learning. As a result, some pupils cannot articulate their learning with confidence, and misconceptions are not always identified and so cannot be corrected. Leaders should ensure that teachers promote appropriate discussions as part of learning.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2013.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	136851
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10227065
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1051
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lorraine Darke
Headteacher	Kerry Tonkin
Website	www.bishopfoxs.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school uses 11 alternative providers for a small number of pupils. Six of these are unregistered alternative providers, five are registered. Most pupils attend school for most of their education.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and members of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, English, science, geography.

- For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector visited lessons in PSHE.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader, examined school records and discussed safeguarding cases.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the views of staff and pupils in Ofsted's online survey.

Inspection team

Sarah Favager-Dalton, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Simon Tong

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023